

## New Zealand Guided Tours

### Decidedly Different Islands

**Operator:** MoaTrek

**Days:** 14

**Start:** Auckland

**Finish:** Christchurch

**Our price:** Check [www.experienzenz.com](http://www.experienzenz.com)

**Enquiries:** Email [travel@experienzenz.com](mailto:travel@experienzenz.com)



### Overview

Experience a colourful kaleidoscope of New Zealand life. Your experienced driver/guide will enable you to discover backroad places, country hospitality and nature in the wild. The scenery is superb and each night you will rest in quality en suite accommodation.

### Highlights

- Boat ride through Waitomo glow worm grotto
- Maori concert and hangi dinner in Rotorua
- Interislander ferry across the Cook Strait
- Return scenic flight to Milford Sound
- Milford Sound nature cruise
- Franz Josef Glacier
- Punakaiki pancake rocks
- Wine tasting, walking, museum visits, garden visits
- Optional activities (such as kayaking and helicopter flights)

### Tour itinerary

**B** = Breakfast   **L** = Lunch   **D** = Dinner

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#### Day 1: Auckland – Waitomo Caves - Rotorua

Your driver/guide meets you at your hotel. We drive into the lush dairy farmlands of the Waikato and visit Waitomo's breathtaking glow worm cave in this dramatic limestone region. Later we drive through farmlands to Rotorua. This evening you will be touched by the warmth of a Maori concert – the traditional welcome to visitors – and a dinner that includes hangi food steamed in an earth oven. **D**

*Accommodation:* Heritage Rotorua (1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 2: Rotorua**

Relax and enjoy leisurely touring in this lakeside town at the heart of Maori culture, geothermal activity and tranquil lakes. We visit Rotorua Museum and choose from a host of optional geothermal attractions and activities exclusive to this region. **B**

*Accommodation:* Heritage Rotorua (2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 3: Rotorua – Taupo – Napier**

We visit stunning Wai-O-Tapu thermal reserve and Huka Falls, where the Waikato River thunders through a narrow chasm, is an irresistible photo stop. From Taupo we cross the ranges to Napier. Renowned for Art Deco architecture, Napier was rebuilt in this style after a disastrous earthquake in 1931. Your guide will introduce you to premier vineyards and artisan food. Your hotel is on the waterfront. **B**

*Accommodation:* Scenic Hotel Te Pania

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### **Day 4: Napier – Martinborough**

Hawkes Bay is New Zealand's food basket. We drive south through Havelock North and Hawkes Bay's pastoral landscape of orchards, farms and vineyards to the Wairarapa region. We visit Mt Bruce National Wildlife Centre, a sanctuary for rare and endangered species including kiwis and tuatara and stay in Martinborough village. **B**

*Accommodation:* Margrain Vineyard Villas

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### **Day 5: Martinborough – Wellington**

In Wellington, the capital city, we visit Te Papa, the national museum and tour the city sights - to Oriental Bay and Mt Victoria for harbour and city views. Your inner city boutique hotel is at the heart of Wellington's eclectic café scene. **B**

*Accommodation:* Bolton Hotel

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### **Day 6: Wellington – Blenheim**

Cruise by ferry across Cook Strait and through Queen Charlotte Sound to Picton in the South Island. We tour this premier wine and food region, including tasting at Cloudy Bay and boutique vineyards that put Marlborough on the map. We dine at Hotel d'Urville's highly regarded Wine Bar and Brasserie. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Hotel d'Urville

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### **Day 7: Blenheim – Marlborough Sounds – Kiahoura**

Leave behind the dry, golden hills of Marlborough for the spectacular scenery of the Kiahoura Coast. Famed for whale watching cruises, Kiahoura is also the place for close encounters with seals and seabirds. Optional whale watch cruise. **B**

*Accommodation:* The White Morph Inn

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### **Day 8: Christchurch – Mt Somers**

We continue down the coast and over the hills to the Canterbury Plains and Christchurch before driving to the foothills of the Southern Alps. We have a specially arranged lunch before heading to the small village of Mt Somers. We dine in Stronechrubie's acclaimed restaurant tonight. **B, L, D**

*Accommodation:* Stronechrubie

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### **Day 9: Mt Somers – Queenstown**

The landscape changes to turquoise lakes and sweeping vistas of tussock grasses and mountains. At Lake Tekapo the picturesque church and sheepdog statue are favourite photo stops. View Aoraki/Mt Cook, New Zealand's highest mountain. The Lindis Pass leads to rugged Kawarau Gorge and Queenstown. Your boutique hotel is close to town with views to Lake Wakatipu and the Remarkables mountain range. **B**

*Accommodation:* Browns Boutique Hotel (1<sup>st</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 10: Queenstown – Milford Sound – Nature Cruise – Queenstown**

This morning take a return flight to Milford Sound deep in the heart of Fiordland National Park. At Milford take a nature cruise down the sound, dominated by iconic Mitre Peak, it's a dramatic fiord landscape of waterfalls, rainforest, mountains and wildlife. Return in time to relax and explore Queenstown this afternoon. **B**

*Accommodation:* Browns Boutique Hotel (2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 nights)

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### **Day 11: Queenstown – Arrowtown – Cardrona Valley – Wanaka**

Perhaps take an early morning jet boat ride on the spectacular Dart River in *The Lord of the Rings* country before driving to Arrowtown, a picturesque goldmining village. The road climbs up the Crown Range then down into the Cardrona Valley. We stop at the quaint Cardrona Hotel and stay in Wanaka, a favourite Kiwi resort town on the edge of Lake Wanaka. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Te Wanaka Lodge

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### **Day 12: Wanaka – Haast Pass – Franz Josef**

Heading into the mountains and rivers of Haast Pass in Mt Aspiring National Park. Take short walks on tracks through native beech forests to waterfalls and blue pools where trout lurk. We visit the Department of Conservation Centre for insight into this region's colourful history, flora and fauna. Continue north through the primeval rainforest of Westland World Heritage Park, stopping at Ship Creek for a stroll on the beach to the dune lake. At Franz Josef we view the advancing glacier. **B**

*Accommodation:* Punga Grove

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### **Day 13: Franz Josef - Punakaiki**

This morning you may choose to take an optional flight over the glaciers and Aoraki/ Mt Cook or perhaps visit Okarito's lovely lagoon, home of the rare kotuku, white heron. Jet boating from Whataroa is an ideal way to see this region. Travel up the coast passing mirror lakes, boulder-laden rivers with glimpses of the Southern Alps. At Hokitika browse the craft galleries – pounamu (jade, greenstone) carving, glass blowing, wood and copper artisans. A coastal road following part of ancient pounamu Trails used by Maori for centuries leads to your hotel. Visit Punakaiki pancake rocks - sculpted sea stacks and towering cliffs. If the tide is right, blowholes will be spreading clouds of spray. Farewell celebratory dinner in your hotel's Waterline restaurant. **B, D**

*Accommodation:* Punakaiki Resort

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### **Day 14: Punakaiki – Christchurch**

Drive back down the coast to Greymouth and eastwards into the magnificent alpine scenery of rugged Otira Gorge and Arthur's Pass National Park. Crossing the Canterbury Plains we

conclude your tour in Christchurch, an English style city of stone buildings, large parks and stunning gardens. **B**

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